

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 09380 01 OF 02 290755Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ACDA-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02  
SS-15 ICA-11 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /092 W  
-----108305 290907Z /10

R 281943Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1194  
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST  
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST  
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE  
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD  
AMCONSUL MUNICH  
AMEMBASSY SOFIA  
AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
USMISSION USNATO  
USMISSION GENEVA  
USDEL MBFR VIENNA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 09380

USSALTTWO

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PARM, UR, US  
SUBJECT: SOVIET REACTION TO VANCE VISIT AND PRESIDENT'S  
PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT ON RB/ER

SUMMARY: THE SOVIET REACTIONS TO THE SECRETARY'S VISIT  
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 09380 01 OF 02 290755Z

AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS CONTINUES TO BE POSITIVE, ALTHOUGH  
THE FIRST COMMENTS ON THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE  
DECLARATION THAT THE BREZHNEV OFFER ON THE ER/RB WEAPON  
"HAS NO SIGNIFICANCE" CREATED A FLURRY OF UNFAVORABLE  
SOVIET REACTIONS. IN PRIVATE THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE  
USA INSTITUTE, R.G. BOGDANOV ARGUED THAT THE OFFER ON  
NEUTRON BOMBS MUST BE SEEN IN CONJUNCTION WITH BREZHNEV'S

DECLARATION NOT TO INCREASE TROOP OR TANK LEVELS IN  
CENTRAL EUROPE. END SUMMARY.

1. GROMYKO'S INTERVIEW IN SOFIA APRIL 26 (ASSUME DEPARTMENT HAS FULL TEXT) STRIKES A NOTE OF CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM, POINTING OUT PROBLEMS STILL UNRESOLVED AND BETRAYING A CERTAIN "WAIT-AND-SEE" ATTITUDE ON WHAT MAY BE EXPECTED FROM THE COMING NEGOTIATIONS. AGAIN, THERE IS NO ATTEMPT TO SUGGEST THAT THE ENTIRE BURDEN FOR FUTURE PROGRESS IS ON THE US.

2. THE FIRST CENTRAL PRESS COMMENTARY SINCE SECRETARY VANCE LEFT MOSCOW IS BY ALEKSANDR BOVIN IN THE APRIL 26 IZVESTIYA. BOVIN POINTS OUT THE POSITIVE SIDE OF THE VANCE MISSION IN MOSCOW; BUT ADDS THE CAUTION THAT THERE ARE STILL "UNRESOLVED" ISSUES AND THAT PERHAPS THE "SEARCH FOR AN AGREEMENT" IS NOT BEING PERSUED WITH SUFFICIENT VIGOR. HE GOES ON TO RECALL THE "INSTABILITY" AND "FLUCTUATIONS" CAUSED IN THE RELATIONSHIP BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, CRITICIZES "LINKAGE" OF SALE WITH "IRRELEVANT" ISSUES, AND NOTES THE INTENTIONS OF "PENTAGON CIRCLES" TO PREVENT AN AGREEMENT. BOVIN ENDS ON AN UPBEAT NOTE AND AT NO POINT IN HIS ARTICLE DOES HE REPEAT THE OLD THEME THAT IT IS ALL UP TO THE US. INSTEAD HE SEES THE NEED TO SEARCH FOR "MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISES." A NOVOSTI PIECE, APRIL 25, BY GENNADY  
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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 09380 01 OF 02 290755Z

GERIASIMOV IS VERY SIMILAR TO BOVIN'S.

3. THERE IS A NEGATIVE FIRST REACTION (BY TASS PRINTED IN PRAVDA APRIL 28) TO THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT THAT THE BREZHNEV RESPONSE ON THE NEUTRON BOMB WAS INSIGNIFICANT. TASS CLAIMS THAT THE PRESIDENT IS IN "DIRECT CONTRADICTION" WITH THE "OPINION OF THE EUROPEANS THEMSELVES." FROM HELSINKI AP CARRIED A REPORT OF A STATEMENT OF BORIS PONOMAREV, WHO IS ATTENDING THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON ARMS CONTROL, ASSERTING THAT BREZHNEV'S COMMENTS WERE "A CLEAR CUT ANSWER TO PRESIDENT CARTER. "

4. VISITING AMBASSADOR LEONARD TELLS US THAT IN A CONVERSATION APRIL 26 IN HELSINKI USA INSTITUTE DIRECTOR G. A. ARBATOV REACTED VERY NEGATIVELY TO THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE REMARKS ON BREZHNEV'S ER/RB STATEMENT. ALSO PRIVATELY USA INSTITUTE DEPUTY DIRECTOR R.G. BOGDANOV TOLD US APRIL 26 THAT THE PRESIDENT'S REACTION WAS A MISTAKE AND THAT THE OFFER NOT TO PRODUCE THE WEAPON MUST BE LOOKED AT IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE STATEMENT LATER IN BREZHNEV'S SPEECH NOT TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TROOPS OR

TANKS IN EUROPE. BOGDANOV TOOK THE LINE THAT BREZHNEV  
COULD NOT PUBLICLY LINK THE TWO PARTS OF HIS SPEECH  
DIRECTLY, APPARENTLY BECAUSE THIS WOULD APPEAR TO BE A COM-  
PLETE BACKDOWN BY THE SOVIETS ON THEIR REFUSAL TO DISCUSS  
US NON-PRODUCTION IN EXCHANGE FOR SOVIET CONCESSIONS ON  
OTHER WEAPON SYSTEMS. HE POINTED TO BREZHNEV'S DECLARA-  
TION THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD NOT INCREASE ITS TROOP  
OR TANK LEVELS IN CENTRAL EUROPE AS A MOST IMPORTANT SHOW  
OF "RESTRAINT" AND ONE WHICH MUST BE EXAMINED IN CONNECT-  
ION WITH THE BREZHNEV STATEMENT ON THE NEUTRON BOMB.

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 09380 02 OF 02 290838Z  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 09380

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5. COMMENT: BOGDANOV IS KNOWN TO HAVE LINKS TO THE KGB

AND HAS BEEN OCCASIONALLY IN THE PAST A PEDDLER OF MIS-  
INFORMATION. WE CONSIDER HIS REMARKS WORTH REPORTING  
SO THAT THE SOVIETS CAN BE SOUNDED OUT MORE CLOSELY ON  
THE EXISTENCE OF ANY LINKAGE BETWEEN THE ER/RB ISSUE AND  
THE DECLARATION WITH RESPECT TO TROOPS AND TANKS. HOW-  
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 09380 02 OF 02 290838Z

EVER, WE ARE SUSPICIOUS OF THE AUTHORITATIVENESS OF HIS  
COMMENTS, WITHOUT FURTHER CONFIRMATION FROM OTHER MORE  
SENIOR SOVIET OFFICIALS. TOON

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## Message Attributes

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